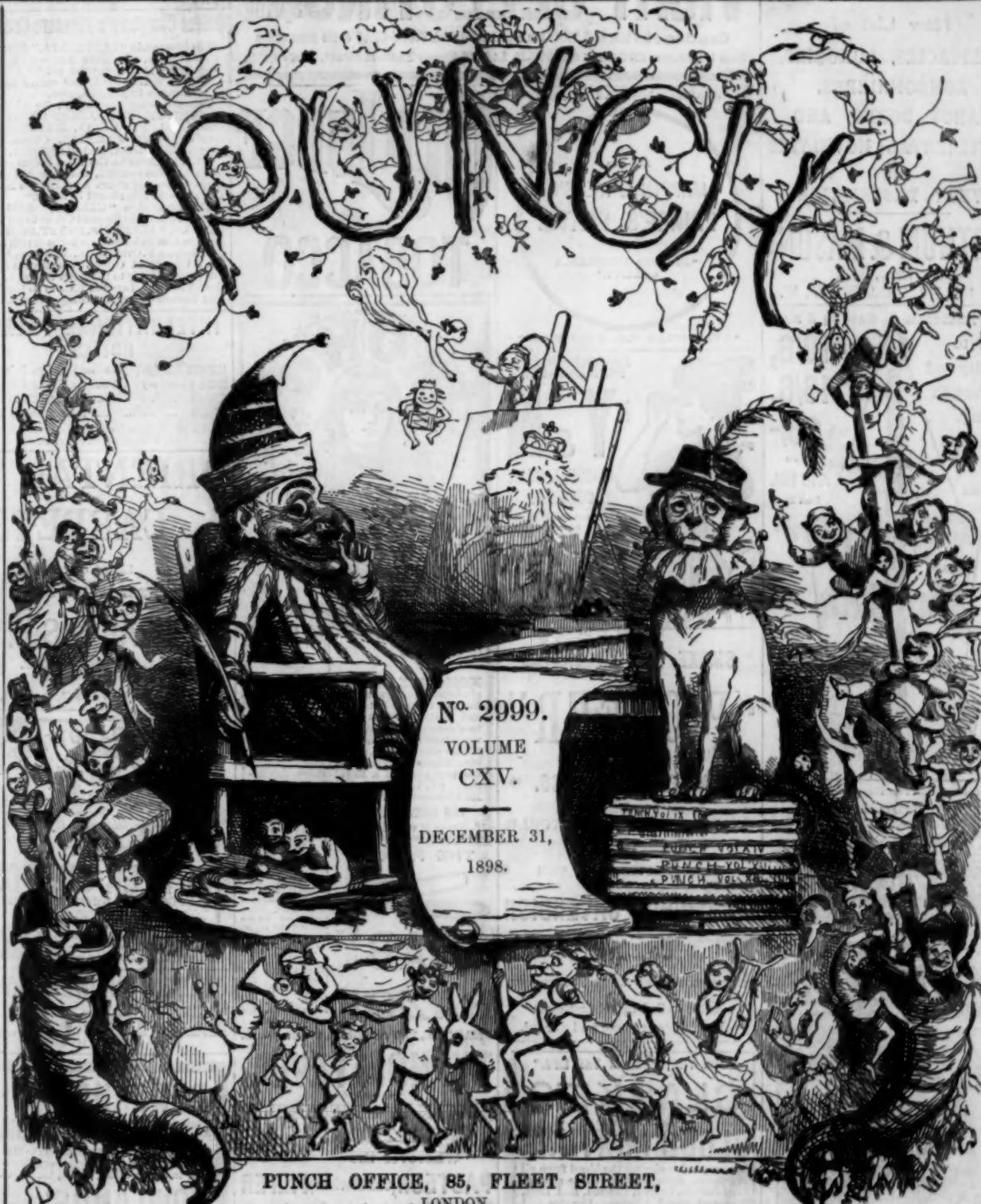


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Commencing with next week's Number "PUNCH" will be published on Tuesday afternoon, so as to permit of Copies being obtainable at the Bookstalls and Newsagents in all places throughout the Kingdom every Wednesday morning. [PUNCH OFFICE, 85, FLEET STREET.

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"IT IS DREADFUL TO THINK WHAT HORRID THINGS PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT ME!"  
 "MY DEAR YOUNG LADY, SURELY YOU DON'T MIND SUCH ILL-NATURED GOSSIP AS ALL THAT?" "CERTAINLY I DO—WHEN IT'S EVERY BIT OF IT TRUE!"

#### A BACHELOR UNCLE'S DIARY.

I.

Monday.—Have seen nothing of my relatives since that terrible visit of MAX and TOMMY to Shrimpton in September. My dear sister CONSTANCE, their mother, sends me muffin-dish. Hate muffins, terribly indigestible; but still, so kind. AUGUSTA presents me with barrel of oysters. So delicious, but never eat oysters for fear of typhoid. None the less thoughtful of her. Must do something in return. Might send them each a box of cigars or—No, the very thing! invite them and their husbands and elder children to dine on Christmas Day. Will word invitation warmly. Well, not too warmly, in case they prefer to refuse. Say 6 p.m. dinner. Delightful (rather) to renew acquaintance with MAX and TOMMY—for a short time. And they may all refuse. I hope—not.

Thursday.—Received replies accepting. AUGUSTA writes that, as head nurse has holiday that day, she is sure I won't mind her bringing TORSY and WILLIE, the two younger children. Charmed, of course; at least, I think so.

*Christmas Day.*—Morning church, peace and goodwill, and a forty-five minutes constitutional afterwards. Luncheon, sole à la Colbert, cold grouse, and just glass and a half Château Yquem. Cigar and the Field. Usual dose by fire just commencing, when sound of wheels causes heart to sink. Listen intently. Yes. No. It's only three o'clock. They can't possibly—  
 THEY HAVE!!!

Dear AUGUSTA and five darlings (AUGUSTA's phraseology, this) sweep into room, bringing with them the freshness of health and an icy draught. "Thought you wouldn't mind, CHARLEY, if we came rather earlier"—she said "rather earlier"—"than you asked us. We'd promised our coachman a holiday, so determined to come over early, and let him get back to enjoy his afternoon. He'll fetch us at ten. Now, don't you disturb yourself. Go on smoking your pipe" (disgusting habit, smoking pipes! Why mistake my Cabana for pipe? So hurtful), "and the children will just amuse themselves here in your room. Here, TORSY." Gives TORSY cherished small Dresden figure to play with. I writhed. "Now, WILLIE, you're not to

touch that nasty cat"—my blue Persian—"leave its tail alone, at once. Here's something to amuse you; may he have this little carriage-clock to play with, CHARLEY?" Say I would rather he played with something else, the coals in the scuttle, for instance. AUGUSTA contemplates the WallSEND as playthings. "Oh! here, this will do!" she says, snatching up cigar-box, and handing out a dozen or so of my choice Cabanas to dear WILLIE. (N.B.—AUGUSTA's husband a non-smoker.) Feel that I could cheerfully sing, "Willie, we have missed you." Bright, breezy creature, AUGUSTA. Other three children sit in a row, staring at me. Keep wary eye on TORSY and WILLIE, and wonder how many of those cigars will be worth smoking when WILLIE has done with them. D—ear WILLIE!

Violent, or suppose I should say hearty, slap on back announces brother-in-law's arrival. AUGUSTA's husband, Dr. PILLINGTON, has aggressive air of hail-fellow-well-met, and punctuates his remarks with acts of personal violence. "How are you, CHARLEY?" Poke in ribs. "Putting a leetle too much on here." Dig at waist-coat. So rude. Shall hate this man directly. "Had a case of the sort once where my patient—AUGUSTA, TOPSY is swallowing that Chinese coin. Yes, had a case—" Awful choking fit by TORSY demands immediate attention, and I escape, saying I have to "see a man." Rush downstairs and implore housekeeper to hurry on dinner. Says quite impossible. Besides, what about other guests? Had forgotten that. Go to stables and smoke cigar. Return 5.30, and find dear CONSTANCE and the General, with MAX and TOMMY, just arrived.

"Good old Uncle CHARLEY, you must be glad to see us again!" says MAX. So hearty. Thump on back from TOMMY. "Won't it be fun!" So homely. Feel I have done nothing to deserve this. MAX takes me aside confidentially. "I've brought you a white rat with pink eyes, Uncle CHARLEY, for a Christmas present, but I'm blowed if I can find it! I—think I must have slipped it into the Governor's greatcoat pocket instead of my own, and—Oh, by gum! there he goes!" Rat dashes across hall. CONSTANCE screams. General swears. Boys and butler chase. Mercifully, my terrier pounces on it, and with one snap rids me of this embarrassing gift. Calm down, and General says, "I hope you've not asked PILLINGTON, CHARLEY? You have? Well, I'll be hanged. You know I never will meet that feller if I can help it. It's too bad!" Glares at me. Why me? Apologise. Frigid greeting between PILLINGTON and General. Awful twenty minutes, and then dinner announced.

#### So Economical.

*First Lady Churchgoer.* Isn't it curious that Christmas Day should fall on a Sunday this year?

*Second Lady Churchgoer* (who has made contribution suffice for the two days). Very; but not, I think, so quaint as that, after Christmas falling on a Sunday, New Year's Day should follow suit. Why shouldn't this happen every year?

Q. What is the difference between Christmas on shore and Christmas at sea?

A. One is spent among the crackers, the other among the breakers.



SEASONABLE REFRESHMENT.

*Sketched in High Street, Whitechapel.*

CHRISTMAS EVE IN ROME.

*Sketched in the Piazza di Spagna.*

## FIGURES.

(By the Ever-Ready Reckoner.)

FIGURES are wonderful things, and would be more marvellous still were it not for the intrusion of facts.

There is something weird and uncanny about figures. By their means, one can make the most abstruse calculations, such as, if a herring and a half cost three half pence, how much half a dozen herrings will cost. Nor is this all; by means of figures one can prove almost anything.

The cynic declares that "every man has his price," which may be true of most of us, and we know, of course, that every woman has her figure, and most of them are proud of it.

Abolish figures, and you do away with company promoters and managers of burlesque theatres at one blow.

Every company is floated. That is the technical term, derived, no doubt, from the fact that most of the shareholders are altogether "at sea" as to the real prospects of the company. But I digress. Every company, then, is started with a pretty set of figures, showing that the profits of the undertaking will be enormous, and the chances of a loss so infinitesimal as to be scarcely worthy of consideration.

When the company is formed, and the promoters have modestly and discreetly retired from the concern with their profits, certain facts thrust themselves forward with the result that not infrequently a pretty figure is cut by the shareholders, especially when the company is one of unlimited liability.

Numbers of pretty figures are to be seen at our burlesque and other theatres where light musical pieces are performed, and the prettier the figures disporting on the stage, the larger is the amount of the figures in the manager's bank-book. This is a fact.

## Cockney Conundrum.

(By 'Arry from Paree.)

Q. Why should New Year's Day be held as a special feast by the supporters of the muzzling order?

A. Because it's the *jour de Long*.

## THE BALLAD OF HAPPINESS TO ORDER.

Now this is the road to Happiness—ye may make full sure of it,  
If ye follow the rules of Tradition in the heart of the people urit.  
For each mince-pie that the mouths of men take well and truly in,  
Or ever the New Year's day shall dawn, one happy month they win;  
Cost-free they may never attain to that which is more than rank and wealth,  
But against each chance of Happiness they must wager a stake of Health!

JOHN ROBINSON bears him stoutly as a man untouched of Fate,  
His glance is Youth, his smile is Joy, and Pride swings in his gait.  
JOHN ROBINSON bears him lightly as a man who walks on air—  
What is the virtue in him? Wisdom of *Punch*, declare!  
He has won no soldier's laurel in the imminent deadly breach,  
He has saved no drowning tripper off Margate's desolate beach;  
He has stirred no soul with music, he has shed no printers' ink,  
Wherewith the blind should be made to see, or unthinking folk to think.

He has won no love of woman—a thing which is hard to beat  
For making a man conduct himself as one who has bought the street;  
He has broken never a record by the might of his body or brain,  
He has broken no shareholders in their simple search for gain;  
He has not promoted companies, he has made no pile of cash,  
Nor has he climbed or travelled, or achieved a social splash.  
If he has gained no praises, so has he gained no blame.  
Neither by truth nor lying has he made a Wide-world Name.  
He has not rowed for Cambridge, he has stroked no Oxford eight,



## NEW YEAR'S EVE.

"SUPPOSE I OUGHT TO TURN OVER A NEW LEAF! I WILL. WON'T MAKE ANY GOOD RESOLUTIONS!"

He has not "run," and he has not "read," he is neither good nor great;  
He has shot no English bison, he has tickled no basking shark,  
In fact, he has done no single thing that is really worth remark!

Yet does he well to lift a proud, if slightly bilious, eye—  
Has he not wrestled and fought with and conquered his twelfth mince-pie?

For this is the road to Happiness, &c.

## SOME SAFE PROPHECIES FOR 1899.

NOVELS will be produced at the rate of one a minute, and read at the speed of one a year.

Ladies' fashions will be controlled by the dressmakers, and the bills paid under the order of the County Court.

A new hotel will be erected on the sea-shore, and a watering-place created to feed it.

Some one will take a theatre, with a capital of three-and-six pence, and fail to the tune of twenty shillings in the pound.

A fair percentage of racegoers will utter an imprecation on learning the name of the winner of the Derby.

The weather will cause some conversation at the Henley Regatta and the Botanical Gardens night *fête*.

Several persons will wish to hang the Hanging Committee of the Royal Academy.

The Lord Mayor will entertain all sorts and conditions of men at the Mansion House.

Various proposals will be made to shorten the long vacation, and remain—proposals.



'INTS ON 'UNTING, BY 'ARRY.

IF AT A MEET YOUR HORSE SHOULD GET A BIT OUT OF HAND, JUST RUN HIM UP AGAINST SOME ONE.

## OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

THE Baron's assistant has been reading *Chitral: The Story of a Minor Siege* (METHUEN & Co.), by Sir GEORGE S. ROBERTSON, K.C.S.I., and reports to his chief:—There may be stories of heroism and endurance and resource that can match this. I, at any rate, know none that can surpass it. For this is, as the children say, a real story. The men who figure in its pages, men brave as the paladins of romance, are real men, the author himself, CAMPBELL, GURDON, WHITCHURCH, HARLEY, TOWNSHEND, and the rest of them. I don't wish to say anything disrespectful about ACHILLES, HECTOR, and their companions, but it is certain that some of them were selfish, others sulky, and all of them, though their courage was unquestionable, bragged intolerably, and invariably stopped their warfare to strip their fallen foe of his armour. But the Englishmen of whom Sir GEORGE ROBERTSON speaks, held out against overwhelming odds, inspired their dusky soldiery with their own simple unfaltering courage, led forlorn hopes, outwitted oriental wiles, fought like Trojans or Greeks, and never gave a thought to themselves. It is a noble story nobly told, and stirs the reader's blood like the blast of a trumpet. These men were not picked for their task by a careful process of selection. Fortuitously brought together when the storm burst upon them, they all seem to have been upheld and ennobled by the same spirit of self-abnegation, cheerful devotion to duty, and heroic endurance. It gives one a higher sense of the greatness of one's birthright to reflect that they were ordinary Englishmen casually ordained to the performance of their great task, and fit to carry it through as they did just because they were Englishmen. Fortunately for them, and, above all things, fortunately for us, they have had in Sir GEORGE ROBERTSON a *ates sacer* admirably equipped for relating their story. Sir GEORGE is no military dry-as-dust, but a writer with a wonderful gift for the simple narrative of brave deeds. His writing swings along with a gallant movement, entirely in keeping with the tale it tells. Every scene is so vividly depicted that the reader fancies himself present in the fort, listens with a breathless anxiety to the strokes of the enemy's picks in the mine, rushes with HARLEY on his sortie, or, again, beholds WHITCHURCH supporting his stricken comrade, BAIRD, and stands with Sir GEORGE beside BAIRD's deathbed. It is a splendid book, and worthily enshrines a splendid story.

One of the Baron's assistants reports as follows:—*The Book of the "Cambridge Review"* (Cambridge: MACMILLAN AND BOWES), is a selection of prose and verse gathered from the columns of the *Cambridge Review*, from 1879 up to the present year. Such a selection from a University journal, if it is to justify its appearance in book form, must do so by its verse, its sprightliness, and its fun. These are the qualities traditionally associated with University literature of the lighter kind. They are to be found—the comparison may be odious, but it is inevitable—in *Echoes from the "Oxford Magazine,"* the journal which at Oxford holds a position analogous to that of the *Review* at Cambridge. But in *The Book of the "Cambridge Review"* these qualities are, I do not say entirely absent, but certainly rare. The reader looks for parody, and he comes upon a solid article of useful information on "Rowing in Greek Triremes." He looks for humour and, lo, he is met with an account of "American Universities," excellent, no doubt, but not humorous. This spirit of information at all costs pervades the prose. The verse is lighter, but even in the verse there is an absence of the true Cambridge sparkle, and the general effect of the little book is, I grieve to say, somewhat stodgy. I may be told, of course, that I look at it from a wrong point of view, that it does not pretend to sparkle or lightness. If so, why should it have been published at all? Cambridge can do and has done better and more brilliant work than this in the field of light literature.

*Military Dialogues* (SANDS & Co.), by Lieut.-Col. N. NEWNHAM DAVIS, are decidedly very amusing, and had the author been less conscientious in literally reproducing the language of Private TOMMY ATKINS, the book would have been as irreproachable as it is humorous. The dialogues are all short, but those carried on by privates, more or less sober, and an occasional sergeant, are not particularly sweet. "A Subaltern's Court-Martial" conveys the notion that every sort of horse-play and tomfoolery has not been banished from the service. "Superannuated" is excellent, and there are genuine touches of nature in "Old Soldiers" and "Mail Day." The Baron, being of opinion that compression is the better part of humour, considers all the descriptions of scene, of "business," and of *dramatis personae*, are considerably too long. The figure on the cover, drawn by R. CATON WOODVILLE, is excellent.

THE BARON DE B.-W.

## HOBSON'S CHOICE.

[At Chicago the other day, Lieutenant Hobson, of Santiago fame, kissed one hundred and sixty-five girls in public after his lecture.—*Daily Paper*.]

YOUNG HOBSON is the hero of the Merrimac affair, Which clearly demonstrated that he's pluck enough to spare; But as things go, he'll possibly regret the same exploit, When finding that his work's cut out, from Texas to Detroit.

The feminine American *en masse* has gone for him, Demanding each a chaste salute—was ever such a whim? The other day eight score went home in patriotic bliss, And swearing they will ne'er wash off the "Lewtenant's" late kiss.

Whene'er he's giv'n a lecture, the policemen make a lane, And fair enthusiasts rush up their guerdon to obtain, While homely damsels catch the rage, and won't be left behind: It mayn't be quite respectable, but that they do not mind!

If this by now is Hobson's choice—this mormonising game Of osculating silly girls by thousands into fame, With countless jealous sweethearts he will have to settle scores, Or wear a mask and muzzle when proceeding out of doors.

## LETTERS TO THE CELEBRATED.

(From Mr. Punch's Vagrant Contributor.)

TO SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT.

MY DEAR SIR.—I wonder if in your pleasant retirement at Malwood it is any satisfaction to you to reflect that you have not only created what the daily guides of our public opinion call an event of the gravest significance, but have also scattered confusion and dismay through the incoherent mob of disaffected politicians, some of whom it has been your privilege to lead? For myself, I think that the satisfaction, if you feel it (and you would be more than human if you did not), is largely mixed with a genuine and painful regret. To see his counsels set at nought, his principles derided, to have a pack of inflated mediocrities yelping at his heels in order to drive him into paths which his honour and the traditions of his past forbid him to tread, to be made answerable for the disappointed ambitions of petty men whose jealousies and querulous revilings make life intolerable, to be compelled to assault the disciplined legions of an entrenched enemy with a rabble, whom it would be affectation to look upon as "friendlies," to have to carry not only the burden of his own mistakes, but the accumulated and well-nigh insupportable load of the faults of others—that, Sir, would be for any one a terrible situation. It is in plain words the situation that you have been called upon to face. And there are circumstances that must have rendered it in a more than ordinary sense galling to you. You are, you have always been, a fighter, a burly warrior delighting in the clash of arms and the tumult of battle. In imagination it was easy to picture you clothed in ponderous mail, and charging on the back of some gigantic heavy-hoofed war-horse straight into the serried masses of the foe. Other men might shrink and grow pale, but you knew not fear: you flung your heart into the centre of the hostile array and followed it rejoicing. Thus you strove and worked: in good days your example inspired your people, in adversity your high courage and your skill were at their service to rally them and help them to pluck success from the overweening confidence of the enemy. And now, old in years, no doubt, but still strong, active and resourceful, with all your brilliant record of action bravely carried out through many tedious years, you find the hearts of your folk estranged from you and you are forced to realize that, whoever henceforth may pluck renown by fighting at their head, you can do no more, since loyalty and faith, the foundations of all leadership, are lacking. And this must be, as I say, a bitter realisation for you who, having fought a good fight manfully, have yet your share both of the pride and of the sensitiveness that are proper to strong and manly natures.

How have these things come to pass? The answer is not easy, but partly, I think, it may be found in the condition of our national temper. We are passing through a warlike and enthusiastic phase. We are no longer satisfied with the inward consciousness of power, nor are we content with the serene demeanour that suits that state of mind. Like our new friends, the Americans, we feel that we must be up and doing, and the louder our doings resound through the world the better are we pleased. No observer can have doubted before their strife with Spain actually broke out that the immense majority of the American people were eager for war, and that, had the war been prevented, they would have felt as though they had been defrauded. Too long, they seemed to say, have we built up gigantic industrial



## YULE-TIDE VISION.

*Mrs. B. "WHERE HAVE I BEEN? WHY, SHOPPING, OF COURSE DON'T I LOOK LIKE IT?"*

*Mr. B. "LOOK LIKE IT! WHY, YOU'RE A CHRISTMAS-TREE COMPLETE!"*

enterprises, planned railroads, secured fortunes from enormous "corneis," bought and sold and lived and died ingloriously:

We who make pretence  
At living on, and wake and eat and sleep,  
And life's stale trick by repetition keep,  
Our fickle permanence  
(A poor leaf-shadow on a brook, whose play  
Of busy idleness ceases with our day)  
Is the mere cheat of sense.

Thus their hearts seemed to speak, and so they rushed to Santiago and laid down their lives.

*De nobis fabula.* The old watchwords have lost their power. Here and there some political hermit still cries out for peace, retrenchment and reform, but few mark him and fewer still applaud. We are to paint the map of Africa red; we are to maintain the biggest navy in the world, aye, and use it too; we are to stand no nonsense from German Emperors, from French Ministers, from Russian Czars, or from South African Presidents. Is there a pith-helmeted soldier in sight? Let us salute him with embraces and sentimental songs celebrating the heroic prowess and the simple virtues of TOMMY ATKINS, the numerically small but the eternally irresistible. Are we to enjoy the Christmas number of an illustrated paper? Then let it give us, in a highly-coloured supplement, at least one lurid picture of battle and destruction. And as to the expense, why, the expense be neglected.

I am not arguing whether this state of feeling be praiseworthy or not. I merely state facts which must be plain even to the least observant. But in such an atmosphere you, Sir, are not at your ease. Other traditions are yours, other principles have guided you, and it may be that you find yourself neither sufficiently young nor sufficiently compliant to trim your sails to this new *popularis aura*. At any rate, you retire from leadership—though I will not take it upon myself to prophesy for how long the retirement may last. For the political scene shifts with a bewildering rapidity, and he would be a bold man who would deny that it is possible for you to be flung back, even against your will, to power on some wave of indignant protest, whether against high Church ritual or against a supposed militarism and a perpetual territorial expansion.

But for the present we bid you farewell—as a leader. That your vigorous strength and keen intelligence can ever resign themselves to idleness, I for one am not willing to believe. This truce of parties cannot last, and when the fight begins again, I know you will not be absent wherever hard blows are to be struck for the principles with which your life has so far been associated.

I am, Sir, with all respect, your faithful servant,  
THE VAGRANT.



*Ethel. "WHY, WHAT'S THE MATTER, GERTRUDE?"*

*Gertrude. "OH, NOTHING. ONLY JACK AND I HAD A QUARREL THE OTHER DAY, AND I WROTE AND TOLD HIM NEVER TO DARE TO SPEAK OR WRITE TO ME AGAIN,—AND THE WRETCH HASN'T EVEN HAD THE DECENCY TO ANSWER MY LETTER!"*

#### WHAT A MAN PROPOSES.

(Page from a Diary in Common Form.)

January 1.—Now I purpose carrying out a long-cherished idea. This is the commencement of a new year, and I intend to record all my thoughts and the events of my life from day to day. Then in times to come I shall be able to refer back, and not only see what I was doing from hour to hour, but what I was thinking. This will be valuable, not only to myself and immediate family, but to my remote descendants. It may be that these pages now blank, but during the coming three hundred and sixty-five days to be filled with a mass of interesting details, may

have a part in the creation of history. Who knows that this volume may not be a very mine of information to some Gibbon, Macaulay or Justin McCarthy of the future? Well, to make a commencement. What did I do and think to-day? Why, I had my hair cut, and thought a shilling too much when I could have got it done at the stores for sixpence.

December 31.—Only one entry! The above! Wasted all the rest of the pages! And haven't exactly carried out my original intention! Well, better luck next year!

LONDON'S LATEST HEALTHFUL KLONDYKE.—Golder's Hill.

#### THE GRAND TRUNK.

It matters not that people say  
"Your Party has no head;  
And simple trunks with this away  
Are practically dead!"  
Though chiefs are useful things, we know,  
And 'tis with pain we sever,  
Yet such may come and such may go,  
But we roll on for ever!

It is, of course, a common plan  
For one to take the lead,  
And pointedly conduct the van  
Upon a prancing steed;  
Yet is he not of any use,  
His *raison d'être* is hollow,  
Who cannot, now and then, induce  
The rank and file to follow.

Now fortunately we possess  
(How seldom this occurs!)  
A singularly level mess  
Of junior officers;  
The claims of each to rule the rest—  
Some shorter, others longer—  
In strength are equal to the best,  
Or even slightly stronger.

One holds that Britain's manly force  
Is undermined by Beer,  
And one would move without remorse  
To purge the bloated Peer;  
One thinks the navy ought to cope  
With any sort of crisis;  
Another planks his final hope  
On peace at famine prices.

(For me,\* I am no man of wrath,  
I own that I should blush  
To go in brogues of breezy cloth  
Tarred with the Tory brush;  
Some want a man of spirit for  
Diplomacy—I differ,  
I'd have him made of water or  
Skim-milk, but nothing stiffer.)

Each for himself and Heaven for all!  
With such battle-cry,  
Though here and there a few may fall,  
We cannot wholly die;  
But when, if ever, we agree  
And join in tuneful chorus,  
Why, then, our unanimity  
Will sweep the field before us!

Somewhere, no doubt, exists the man  
Peculiarly designed  
To lead our lively caravan  
Or else to push behind;  
He may be turning up to-day,  
This week, or next, or never;  
But let him come or stay away,  
We still roll on for ever!

\* "They would never wrap themselves in that filthiest of Tory rags, 'a spirited foreign policy.'"  
—Dr. Spence Watson at the Conference of the National Liberal Federation.

#### A FORECAST.

NINETY-NINE, who in the old year's wake  
Follow in a never-broken line,  
Come and bring us luck, for pity's sake,  
Ninety-nine.

Now with brightest auguries you shine  
(Ah! the old year had enough of ache)  
Peace you offer us, and hope divine.

Yes, but of the promises you make—  
Tell us as we worship at your shrine—  
How many per hundred will you break?  
Ninety-nine?

A SPOT TO BE AVOIDED BY ROYAL  
ARTILLERYMEN.—Gunnersbury.



SWAIN Sc.

1899.

HIS FIRST APPEARANCE.





## AT A CHRISTMAS JUVENILE PARTY.

*Aunt Florence.* "I WILL FIND YOU A PARTNER, ETHEL, DEAR. BETWEEN OURSELVES, NOW, HAVE YOU ANY CHOICE?"  
*Miss Ethel.* "WELL, AUNTIE, I SHOULD PREFER ONE WITH A MOUSTACHE!"



## SEATS OF THE MIGHTY.—IV.

A fine Chair, of doubtful design; originally a Lounge. Has been much altered in Government offices. Made of Scotch fir, decorated with "goffer" wood. Like the Diplomatic Chair (No. 3), it is uncomfortable to sit upon. For a time at Hertford (with "my uncle"); afterwards at Dublin Castle, where it proved useful.

## WONDERS OF THE NEW YEAR.

**THE Tz-R**—If my peace rescript will end in a first-rate European war.

**THE K-s-R**—Where I shall be off to next.

**EMPEROR OF CH-NA**—If I shall dispose of my Aunt.

**DOWAGER-EMPERESS OF CH-NA**—If I shall get rid of my nephew.

**M. F-RE**—If I shall have to resign the Presidency of the Republic in favour of Marshal of France DREYFUS.

**KING OF IT-LY**—If I shall make both ends meet.

**PRESIDENT McK-NL-Y**—If the British lion will take kindly to my tariff scheme.

**THE S-LT-N**—If I shall have a look-in at the next meeting of the Concert.

**MARQUIS OF S-L-SH-RY**—What I shall do with the Colonial Secretary.

**RT. HON. J. CH-MB-RL-N**—How I shall wake them up at the Foreign Office.

**RT. HON. SIR W-LL-M H-RC-T**—How they will get on without me.

**LORD R-s-B-RY**—What is my exact position.

**MR. H-NN-K-R H-T-N**—When Australia will come into the Imperial Penny Postage.

**THE P-STM-ST-R G-N-R-L**—If anything can be done towards cheapening National and Inter-Colonial telegraphy.

**LORD K-TCH-N-R**—If the Gordon College at Khartoum will prove more successful than that started forty-five years ago; and

**MR. PUNCH**—If all the above wonders will still be matters of conjecture at the end of the present century.



## SEATS OF THE MIGHTY.—V.

## THE WOOLSACK RECREATION CHAIR.

A very distinguished, strong, tough, and rather dusty chair, made from the remains of old cases, from designs of great antiquity. Its history begins with the Tichborne trial; since in various law offices.

## READY-MADE COATS(-OF-ARMS); OR, GIVING 'EM FITS.



THE RIGHT HON. SIR WILLIAM VERNON HARCOURT, P.C., M.P.

*Arms:* Quarterly; 1st, On a ship party-coloured, shattered, dimasted and water-logged, a crew prone to mutiny regardant in complacence over the side a tried and weather-beaten chief avoirdupois proper, incontinently jettisoned without scruple or remorse; 2nd, On a ground of grievance two tents of Achilles, freely canvassed in the press, conjoined morly in tension and possibly somewhat overstrained; 3rd, A masterly heraldic bouquet of finance, charged with a fleece of gold lifted proper from sundry millionaires gorged or, collared in transit on the hop; 4th, On a ground protestant kensitée a veteran campaigner statant single-handed (on his helmet the motto "Ut veniant omnes!"—"Let 'em all come!") bearing a plume mordant guttée de l'encre transfixing several anglican traitors foxy to the last but exposed proper in mummery. *Crest:* Emergent from a crown of the plantagenets, a rogue-elephant of the forest jambonée, thwarted circumvented and finally ousted with alacrity. *Motto:* "Contra dexter et andax"—"Skilful and bold in opposition.") *Supporters (otherwise engaged!—mainly in accepting resignations by return of post—but in place thereof possibly the following will answer the purpose):* Dexter, an eminent littérateur similarly isolated and unique in courtesy, and gratitude, charged with a colossal biography proper; sinister, an heraldic sun luluos radiant in geniality, exemplarily staunch and filial to the core. *Second Motto (Welsh translation):* "Lyddthe ryraf, dydd yu effyr, nod yff y nowydd!"

## THE BLUE MEDITERRANEAN.

(Extracts from the Travel Diary of Toby, M.P.; Third.)

P. & O. Mail Steamer "Peninsular." *Gibraltar, Friday.*—The Member for Sark, who once journeyed round the world, tells me the thing that struck him most was the way in which pacific England, a nation of shopkeepers, has grabbed all the best bits. Sometimes they are big, like India, Australasia, Canada, and South Africa. Sometimes they are small, like Hong Kong, Aden, Malta, and Gibraltar. But wherever you go, in whichever hemisphere, North of the Line or South, you find the British flag flying at intervals, often in quite unexpected places.

"When I was a boy," says Sark, "I used to read a book called *Half Hours with the Best Authors*. Consider the universe, and you'll find that England has possessed herself of "Half Hours with the Best Bits."

Something particularly audacious, if you come to think of it, in our position at

Gibraltar. Here's this rock, ultimate acre of Europe to the South-West, apparently especially designed for impregnable fortification. Its value is multiplied by the splendid bay in which men-of-war may safely ride at anchor within hail of the shore. For centuries the rock flew the flag of Imperial Spain. To-day it is ours. British soldiers garrison it. British guns perforate its rocky front; in the bay rides a British fleet—to-day in exceedingly low spirits at the collapse of the war-cloud.

"In a week," said a gallant Captain, with a faraway look in his eyes, turned in the direction of Marseilles, "there wouldn't have been a French war-ship afloat in the Mediterranean, and I suppose the Channel fleet would have looked after them in the North. At a pinch we could have managed both ends."

And the good man turned away to hide the unbidden tear.

*Saturday.*—The "blue" Mediterranean inky black under a leaden sky. The rain-clouds spouting over Africa. On the other

side the coast of Spain, softly outlined by ring of fairy hills, on which a sun unknown to us pours a flood of rosy light.

Sit on deck reading *Mr. and Mrs. Neville Tyson*. A clever book rather than a nice one. *Neville Tyson* is the sort of man that only a woman armed with blue and red chalks, vitriolic flame being easy of access, could draw. Her idea of poor harmless man is "a brute with the immortal human soul struggling perpetually to be, the brute in him supreme and indestructible." That is the nightmare sort of man *MAY SINCLAIR* imagines, and she has forcibly realised her idea. In artistic contrast with *Mr. Neville Tyson* is *Mrs. Neville Tyson*, the frivolous, flirting, outwardly indifferent wife, who for love of the brute abandons her passionately-loved child. Incidentally she loses her peerless beauty in saving her husband from the fire, which *SARK* is pleased to reflect, must be his everlasting portion. When he deserts her a third time she dies. As for the paragon of husbands, he falls with his face to the foe in the Sudan, and even in Drayton Parva, where all things are remembered, his sins are forgotten. "Nay, more," *MAY SINCLAIR* writes, with the gentle sarcasm that occasionally flashes above the blue light of her story, "they forbear to speak of his wife's sins out of respect of the memory of a brave man."

Some more, gentle *MAY*, please, but harp on a pleasanter theme.

## A TRUE PHILANTHROPIST.

"Many English Vicars have announced that cyclists attending their churches will find places for storing their machines, but a New York clergyman has carried out the brilliant idea of storage for babies."—*Globe*.

*TWINS!* O ye Gods!—Then groaning, I—  
"Ah! how much longer will they come?  
Quot anni, heu! to liberi,  
And lo! the cry is still they come!  
There's KATE, MARIA, JANE and JACK,  
And now another two of them—  
The thing is past a joke. Alack!  
Whatever shall I do with them?"

While brooding thus, I chanced to learn  
About a gentle cleric, a  
Good soul of philanthropic turn,  
Who hails from North America;  
He cares for little infants all,  
The dark, the fair, the caroty,  
The lean, the fat, the great, the small,  
With all-embracing charity.

As up-to-date Divines on stump  
Bid cyclists bring their bikes with them,  
Providing rooms where each may pump,  
Clean, oil—do what he likes with them;  
He bids the mothers come to pray,  
And let the infants small come too!  
The bottled babe, the toddler gay,  
By all means, let 'em all come too!

"Just step in here, and you will see,  
Upon a glimpse most cursory,  
The vestry makes, you will agree,  
A quite ideal nursery.  
The little darlings here at large  
May gambol, as is right, together—  
Of course, a curate's left in charge  
To see they do not fight together."

I started up, my beaming face  
No longer like a lemon. I  
Exclaimed, "Behold! the very place  
For my beloved *Gemini*!  
I'll take them to this good man; he  
Will joyfully receive the brats,  
And then I'll slip away, d'you see?  
And with the curate leave the brats."



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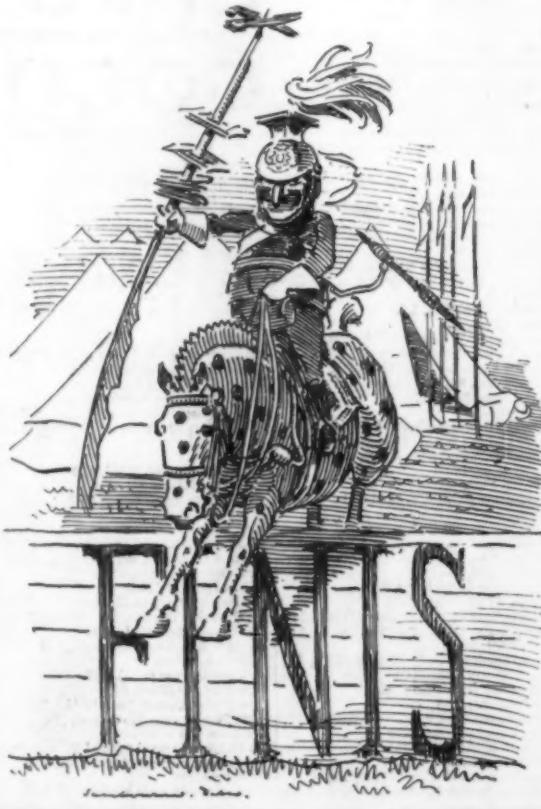
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